



# MONTEREY NEWS



DECEMBER 1995  
VOLUME XXV · Number 12

## THE TOWN

On November 20 the Select Board met with a group representing the head coach of the U.S. Martial Arts National and Olympic Team, Byung Min Kim (who was not present), to discuss the proposed purchase of Camp Deerwood property located on Lake Buel Rd. The group included George Deren (chief executive officer of the organization), Thomas Brown (vice president), Michael Lavin (chief financial officer), Sandra Essington (psychiatric social worker), and Angus MacDonald (broker). They were accompanied by local attorney David Hellman. The group proposes to purchase the Deerwood property for use as an educational facility for meditation, yoga, and various martial arts (Tae Kwando and Tai Chi). The facility would include a day camp from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and various related events on a year-round basis, such as classes, workshops, and weekend retreats. The group proposes to apply for a permit as a nonmunicipal organization under Section IV.D. VII.C. of the Monterey Zoning Bylaws. Each of the group's officers addressed the Board regarding their particular area of interest and expertise. The Board addressed the question of permitted uses under the current designation of "children's camp." The issue will be discussed further at a joint meeting of the Select Board and Planning Board, set for Tuesday, November 28, at 7 p.m.

The Select Board in their role as Board of Health have been notified through Tri-Town Sanitarian Peter Kolodziej that there is a proposal by a local developer to purchase a 300-acre parcel on Mt. Hunger and Tyringham Roads in Monterey. Developer Tom

Spencer, whose most recent project has been in Stockbridge, proposes to create seventeen lots on the property, although he said there is enough frontage to accommodate thirty-five building lots. This piece of property, once owned by the late Gay Noe McLendon of Blue Hill Road, and now belonging to her heirs, has historically not been available for development because most of the property was not suitable for septic systems: it would not "perc." The developer is proposing a shared septic system, now possible under new Title 5 regulations, to be constructed on two acres of land bordering Tyringham Road. The property has been in Chapter 61 tax status for several years. Under Chapter 61, the Select Board must be notified of the proposed sale of the property; the Board then has 120 days to exercise the Town's right of first refusal. During the November 21 meeting of all town Boards and Officers, the Select Board explained the proposal, and asked those in attendance their opinions regarding various options for the 300-acre parcel.

The Board recently reviewed a proposal by Berkshire Housing Development Corporation of Pittsfield to administer the Septic System Repair Program. This program, which is being developed by the Department of Communities and Development, is designed to provide financial assistance to lower- and moder-

ate-income property owners who are replacing or repairing onsite sewage-disposal systems. The Board ratified the proposal; Georgiana O'Connell is the Town's contact person for this project.

Tad Ames of the Berkshire Natural Resources Council and Bob Thieriot met with the Select Board to request that the Board accept a Conservation Restriction

on Thieriot's Wellman Rd. property. Mr. Thieriot outlined his plans for woodland preservation and the surveying of a public trail that crosses the parcel. It was unanimously voted by the Board to approve the Conservation Restriction to the Berkshire Natural Resources Council, Inc., and the Monterey Preservation Land

Trust, Inc., of the land of Robert Thieriot pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 184, Section 32.



Town Hall is on schedule with various repair projects. Tom Gillis recently fixed a leak in the roof. Next on the list is the installation of storm windows. Select Board member Georgiana O'Connell noted that only two windows in the entire building open. With updated storm windows the building should be warmer in winter and cooler this summer. O'Connell also noted that the Board has decided to retain the current wood-mullion windows, which would be expensive to replace.

— Maggie Leonard

## BEQUEST PROPERTY TO BE VIEWED

Edith Wilson and Margery McLaughlin's generous bequest to the Town of Monterey of two houses and land on New Marlborough and Sandisfield Roads needs careful study and consideration by townspeople.

In order to begin the process toward a decision about acceptance, all town boards, committees, and personnel will be offered time to view the buildings and grounds to help them form ideas for best use. Please remember that the Town does not yet own the property, and that the estate's executors are responsible for maintaining the building and keeping the contents safe. With this in mind, municipal groups may view the property on Sunday, December 3, and Saturday, December 9, 1995, from twelve noon until 3 p.m. each day. We ask that board and committee members, town personnel and volunteers arrange to visit the property during these times, when the house will be open and monitored.

— Gige O'Connell  
Monterey Select Board

## SOUTHERN BERKSHIRE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Interested residents may pick up a copy of the 1994-95 SBRSD Annual Report at the Monterey Town Hall, Monterey School, Monterey General Store, New Marlborough Town Hall, New Marlborough Library, New Marlborough Central School, Mill River Store, Southfield Store, or the Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

If it would be more convenient, please call Linda Higgins at 229-8778 to have a copy mailed to your home.

The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ, Monterey, MA 01245.

## NEW MARLBOROUGH AND MONTEREY SCHOOL NEWS

October at NMC. Halloween was enjoyed with an all-school party. The children (some teachers and staff too!) showed up in costume to hear pre-K and the first grade recite two ghostly poems. There was a parade of beasties and beauties and, finally, snacks and a mystery walk sponsored by the PTA.

October also saw the beginning of an eight-week course on self-reliance. Sponsored by Camp Fire Boys and Girls, the "Count on Me" program reinforces that the children can count on themselves to do their best in a given situation.

Several community volunteers have begun enrichment classes. Jessica Redman has begun a math enhancement project for grades 2-4. Señor Guerrero is back giving Spanish classes. Bueno!

In November, K-4 starts DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education). Officers Paul Storti and Justice Carey will once again conduct the program.

Reminding our children that we are part of a larger community, students and staff collected non-perishable foods for a Thanksgiving food pantry.

NMC has covered Halloween, Thanksgiving, and now, anticipating Christmas, they travel to Mt. Everett on November 17 to see a mini-performance of the Albany-Berkshire Ballet's *The Nutcracker*. Wonderful music, beautiful dances, and magic—should be some bright eyes and sparkling smiles after this field trip! The fourth grade will miss this, however, because they are on their own field trip to the Boston Museum of Science and the Omni Theater. They plan to see the Theater of Electricity and the Omni multi-media show "Stormchasers." From reading about this show in *The Boston Globe*, I know it is about a group of scientists that tracked tornadoes as they were happening. The fourth grade could probably tell them a thing or two! Hope to have first-hand reports on this trip for the next issue.

Bad weather canceled November's PTA meeting—it's that time of year.

Thanks to Dale Duryea for spending the day at NMC with a nature and wildlife presentation. And thanks also to Jim Kelly for apples, and Anna Duryea for her cider press.

— Deborah Mielke

## MONTEREY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

### Christmas Eve Services

Candlelight Service of Carols and Readings at 7 p.m.  
followed by Gould Farm's "Living Creche" at about 8 p.m.

Candlelight Service of Reflective Meditation at 11:30 p.m.  
with Carols and Devotional Readings.

### Regular Sunday Services • 10 a.m.

(Child care available)

#### For assistance & information:

Keith Snow (Pastor) ..... 528-5850  
Bob Emmel (Clerk, Trustee) ..... 528-1321  
Tom O'Brien (Trustee) ..... 269-7471  
Judy Hayes (Worship) ..... 528-1874

#### With a prayer request or to join the Prayer Chain:

MaryKate Jordan ..... 528-5557  
Mary or Ray Ward ..... 528-9243  
Judy Hayes ..... 528-1874

## GLITTER AND TINSEL, OR TOUGH LOVE

It would serve us well, in the midst of the romanticism that seems to overwhelm our celebrations this month, to inject a note of realism. Romanticism can be a costly cover-up.

The words of Jesus, as recorded by Luke, proclaim a joyful preparation and expectation that are not facades to hide reality from us for a few days or weeks. Rather, they call us to face the world as it is, and ourselves as we are. In the midst of the "shaking of the foundations" (moral, economic, religious, cultural) of our lives, Jesus speaks a word of unconditional love. When we are left to ourselves and the miniature wars that are often descriptive of our relationships with others, Jesus speaks a word of forgiveness. In the midst of our fear and despair, Jesus affirms the power of God by drawing near to us in the innocence and hope of a baby. "As ironic as it seems, in the darkest day of life (our life, too?), the day when God seems most removed, (she) may be closer than ever before." (*Good Morning Forever*, by William Littleton.)

As anyone who has planted a garden knows, before the planting there must be the clearing. As long as we cherish our illusion of love apart from God, as long as we live by pride, the beauty, the reality of the season will pass us by unnoticed.

— Keith Snow, Pastor

Monterey United Church of Christ

## MONTEREY LIBRARY WINTER FILM SERIES

The Monterey Library will hold its annual family film series in January and February this winter on the following Saturday evenings: January 20 and 27, and February 3 and 10. Movies (suitable for all ages) are in 16mm format; they begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Monterey Library basement. Admission is free; popcorn and apple juice are available at nominal cost.

At press time movie titles were not yet confirmed, but are expected to include some of the following: *His Girl Friday* (1940), with Cary Grant and Rosalind Russell; *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman* (1974), with Cicely Tyson; *Brighty of the Grand Canyon* (1967), with Joseph Cotten; *Butterflies Are Free* (1972), with Goldie Hawn and Edward Albert; *Downhill Racer* (1969), with Robert Redford and Gene Hackman; *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963), with Dick Van Dyke and Janet Leigh; *The Good Earth* (1937), with Paul Muni and Louise Rainer; and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967), with Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, and Sidney Poitier.

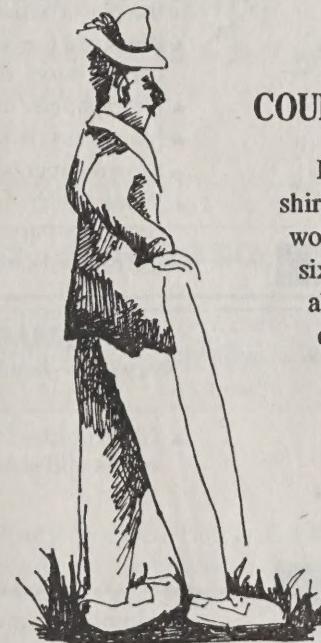
The confirmed schedule will appear in the January issue of the *Monterey News*. Please join us!

— Eileen Clawson

## HAYMAKING BIDS SOUGHT

The Cemetery Committee is seeking proposals to hay the recently purchased land adjoining Corashire Cemetery. Those interested may write the Monterey Cemetery Committee, c/o Linda Thorpe, Monterey, before January 15, 1996. For more information, call me at 528-2164.

— Linda Thorpe

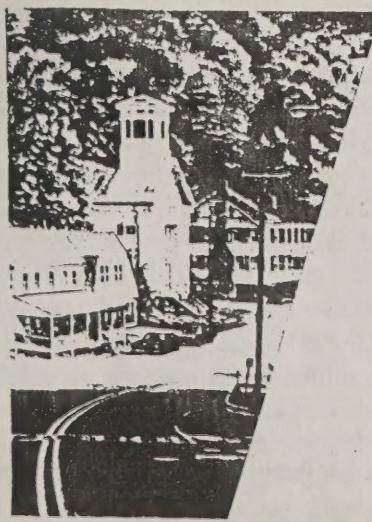


## COUNCIL ON AGING

Elder Services of Berkshire County invites all women of Monterey over sixty years of age to learn about breast and cervical cancer. The program is scheduled for Friday, December 8, at 9 a.m. in the basement of Town Hall. There will be presentations on mammograms, pap smears, and the availability of free screening.

Breakfast will be provided free of charge. For more information and reservations, call Anne Wehry at 1-800-544-5242, or Pauline Nault at 528-5994.

— Pauline Nault



### BERKSHIRE AUTUMN

A full size, full color litho-print of MONTEREY village caught in the glow of a sunlit October day. From an original acrylic painting by FRANK D'AMATO.

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# RECYCLING FOR THE TOWN OF MONTEREY

For residents and businesses with payment of yearly fee and a sticker attached to vehicle

## MATERIAL

## WHAT TO RECYCLE

## HOW TO PREPARE

## DO NOT INCLUDE

### PAPER AND CARDBOARD

Keep these materials together and separate from commingled materials



**PAPER**

- ▲ Paperback & phone books (remove covers)
- ▲ Junk mail (no plastic windows)
- ▲ Boxboard (cereal, shoe, cracker boxes, etc.)
- ▲ Newspapers/inserts
- ▲ Magazines/catalogs
- ▲ Brown paper bags
- ▲ White letter/computer paper
- ▲ Corrugated cardboard

- ▲ Flatten cardboard, remove tape
- ▲ Paper must be dry
- ▲ Remove plastic liners, windows and wrappings
- ▲ Place in paper bag or loose
- ▲ Do not tie with string

- ▲ No soiled paper
- ▲ No pizza boxes or egg cartons
- ▲ No waxed paper, plastic windows, wrappings or liners
- ▲ No other paper items such as napkins, towels, plates/cups, tissues, photographs, etc.
- ▲ No string tied around paper

### COMMINGLED CONTAINERS

Keep these materials together and separate from paper



**GLASS**

- ▲ Glass bottles/jars, all colors and sizes

- ▲ Rinse clean
- ▲ All labels may stay
- ▲ Lids, collars, neck rings, corks, etc. may stay

- ▲ No other glass items such as window glass, dishes, glasses, Pyrex, ceramics, light bulbs
- ▲ No broken glass



- ▲ Aluminum cans
- ▲ Tin/steel cans and lids
- ▲ Aluminum foil

- ▲ Rinse clean
- ▲ Labels may be left on
- ▲ May flatten

- ▲ No other metal items
- ▲ No paint or aerosol cans
- ▲ No pots/pans or coat hangars
- ▲ No cookie tins or baking trays

**METAL**



- ▲ Milk and juice cartons (tent tops)
- ▲ Drink boxes

- ▲ Rinse clean
- ▲ Remove straws & caps
- ▲ Flatten
- ▲ Co-mingle with glass jars and metal cans

- ▲ No straws or caps
- ▲ Do not mix with paper

**POLYCOATED**



**PLASTIC**

Recycle all plastic together in same container

- ▲ Plastic milk jugs, soda and detergent bottles
- ▲ All plastic labeled 1 2 3 5 6
- ▲ Foam food containers
- ▲ Pill/medicine bottles
- ▲ Six pack rings
- ▲ Caps and lids

- ▲ Rinse clean
- ▲ Include caps and lids (remove from containers)
- ▲ Detergent spouts O.K.
- ▲ Flatten or crush

- ▲ No plastic bags
- ▲ No motor oil containers or other automotive liquids
- ▲ No pesticide or other hazardous material containers
- ▲ No "peanuts" or other foam packaging

MORE ↗



## WHITE GOODS

- ▲ All large appliances
- ▲ Check with attendant for instructions



## TIRES

- ▲ Tires
- ▲ Check with attendant for instructions



## SCRAP METAL



## AUTO

- ▲ Remove all non-metal materials from item
- ▲ Check with attendant for instructions
- ▲ Motor oil, filters and antifreeze
- ▲ Car Batteries
- ▲ Check with attendant for instructions

## MONTEREY TRANSFER STATION AND RECYCLING CENTER

**Location:** Gould Rd. (Turn left on Curtis Rd., 1 1/2 miles east of town center on Route 23. Transfer Station is straight ahead on Gould Rd. at the end of Curtis Rd.)

**Hrs:** Wed. & Sat. 8 am-1 pm      Sunday (Winter) 10 am-4:30 pm    (Summer) 10 am-6 pm

**Fee:** Notice of annual fee for transfer station use is mailed to all households and businesses in town. Vehicle identification sticker (available with payment of fee) is required for use of transfer station. No extra charge for recycling.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 528-1443, 528-0550, 528-1114**

## THE JAWS OF RECYCLING OPEN WIDE.

## THE BIDWELL HOUSE

The traditional holiday Open House for Museum Members will be held on Sunday, December 3, 2-5 p.m. The Bidwell House extends a warm "thank you" to all those who have supported the museum through membership. This year's seasonal decorations will be based on those likely to be found in a New England home from the Colonial era to the mid-nineteenth century.

If you're looking for a unique holiday gift for that history lover on your list, or if you don't yet have your own Bidwell House membership, now is the time. Just call 528-6888.

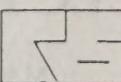
The Bidwell House would like to extend appreciation to all those who generously volunteered their time to make this a successful season. Thanks to Barbara Tryon, Elizabeth Ryan, Ann Hanchett-Boland, Vickie Ginter, Gertrude Burke, and Mary Carroll for helping as docents. The beautiful and bountiful heirloom vegetable garden was made possible by the hard work of the following people: Ann Hanchett-Boland, Vicki Boulay, Jim Gallagher, guests of Gould Farm, Steve Ginbel, Dr. Richard

Greene, David Boland, Wendy Liebenow, Dave Markwood, Chuck and Jessie Merrill, Tim Metzger, Phil Morrison, Jo Ellen Mumford, Ellen Rolston, Steve Snyder, Bob Thieriot, Tom Weldon, and Noah Wixon. Volunteers who helped make the annual folk concert a great event were Bill Bohn, Elizabeth Ryan, Judy Hayes, Gertrude Burke, Ann Hanchett-Boland, David Boland, Andy Matlow, Tom Weldon, Roger Tryon, Joe Baker, Vince Junior, and Muriel and Jonathan Lazzarini. Several excellent programs were made possible this season through donations of time and talent by the Bigger Light Theater School for the production of *The Scarlet Letter*; Bob Rausch for leading the Annual Royal Hemlock Walk; James Miller for the

Open Hearth Cooking Demonstration; Tom Weldon for the Owl Prowl, Wild Herb Walk, and Tree Identification Workshop; and Jo Ellen and Heather Mumford for help with Herb Day. In-kind donations came from the following local businesses: Monterey General Store, Mount Everett Landscaping, Taylor Rental, Richard Sheridan, Lowland Farm, and Openspace Management.

Without the help of our volunteers, the support of our members, and donations from our community businesses, The Bidwell House could not continue to offer such fine educational programs to the public. Thank you all for your support.

— Anita Carroll-Weldon



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## CHILDREN'S HEALTH

These activities are planned for December:

**December 2** Coats for Kids distribution, 1-4 p.m., 940 South Main Street (the former Shelley's building), Great Barrington. Sponsored by South Berkshire Task Force for Families and Children. For more information call Jennifer at 528-4470.

**December 4** Parent-infant social hour starts at 12 noon at Russell House, 54 Castle Street, Great Barrington. Mrs. Santa Claus will visit, and photos will be taken of child with Mrs. Santa. Refreshments. No charge.

**December 9** Tour of Mason Library Children's Room, Great Barrington, 10:30 a.m. Sponsored by Fathers' Group, CHP.

**December 14** Holiday Party, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Great Barrington Parent-Child Playgroup, at Camp Eisner, Great Barrington. Mrs. Santa Claus will visit.

We need your help! Several people have inquired about Step-Parent Support Groups and Saturday Parent-Child Playgroups. We need to know how many people would be interested in such groups before we plan them. Please call Russell House and leave a message for Claudette.

Grandma's Attic will be open Thurs-

day, December 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Saturdays, December 2, 9, and 16, 10 a.m.-12 noon. The schedule has been shortened due to the holiday season.

Community Services in Great Barrington will sponsor a Santa Fund in conjunction with Ames Department Store. For more information, please call 528-1947.

During this busy and stressful season, take time to care for yourself. Your child depends on you. Relax, get enough sleep. The following is from an article on safety tips in *Growing Together*, November 1995:

What is the most dangerous threat to children during the holiday season?

It isn't eating too much candy or staying up late—it's accidental poisoning. When you're visiting, ask relatives to put potential hazards, such as medications and toxic cleaning supplies, out of reach of youngsters. This includes attractive ornamental plants such as poinsettias or wreaths which can include poisonous berries. Be sure the phone number of your local poison center is posted by your telephone. If the emergency access number in your area is not 911, make sure the correct number is posted by the telephone. [Massachusetts Poison Center number: 1-800-682-9211]

If you travel, don't forget to ALWAYS buckle up, even when driving short distances.

Everyone in the car should be wearing a seat belt or be in a car seat. It's the law. And it may save your life.

Check the age specifications on the toys you buy, and make sure they match the child's age. Before allowing your child to play with toys given as gifts, check them for broken pieces or sharp edges that could cause injury. (Children under three years should not have access to toys with small parts that could be swallowed.)

Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) as a precautionary measure for emergencies. [Fairview Hospital offers these classes on a regular basis.]

Remember: the best gift for your child is you! Children can become overwhelmed by too many presents. Stay within your budget and purchase a gift that can be used many times.

We have new additions to our book and video lending library:

**Books** *How To Talk So Kids Can Learn*, by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, and *Your Three Year Old*, by Louise Bates Ames and Frances Ilg

**Videos for children** *Scamper the Penguin*, and *The Seventh Brother*.

Any special requests? Call and let us know, 528-9311.

Best wishes for a safe, healthy, happy holiday season!

— Claudette Callahan

## CHARLES J. FERRIS Attorney at Law



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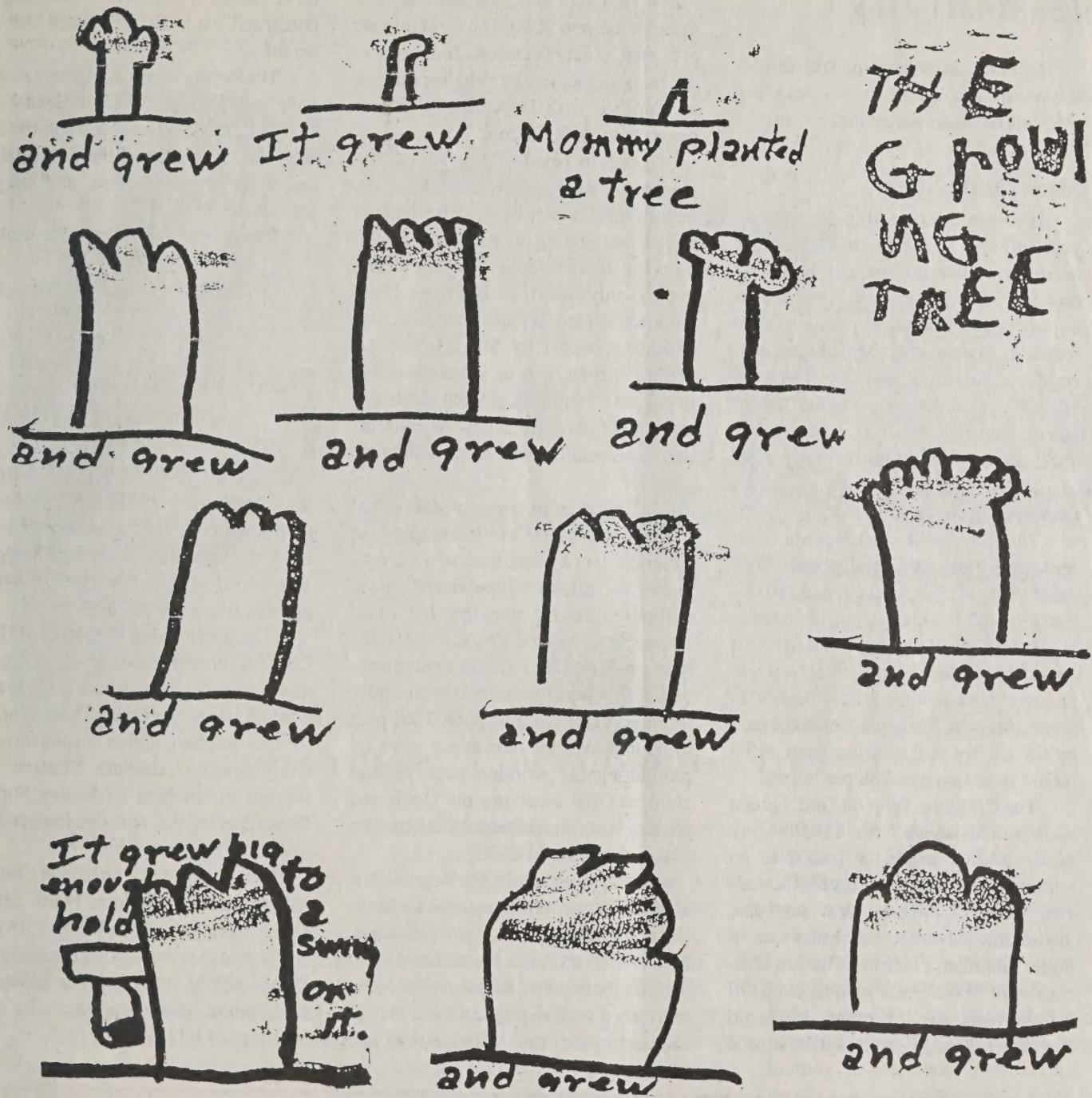
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*"The Growing Tree," written and drawn by Scott Duhon, left-handed, in the Monterey Kindergarten.*

A detailed line drawing of a stringed instrument, likely a banjo or mandolin, shown from a side-on perspective. The instrument has a curved neck with tuning pegs at the top, a soundboard with a decorative pattern, and a long, flowing tailpiece. A bow is positioned across the strings.

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## THE POLITICIANS

*Our only letter from the State House this month came with its own title. We don't make these things up.*

### Mean People Stink!

If you are a parent struggling to send your children to college, or if your mom or dad is in a nursing home, or if you are enrolled in a job training program in hopes of a brighter future, prepare for the worst the bonehead leaders in Congress could possibly come up with. They have created a new meaning for the phrase "mean spirited." When you stop caring about people, you just stop caring, period.

This is what the uncaring Newt Gingrich regime has to offer:

The Elderly. Slashed to pieces. Our seniors will pay more and get less. The GOP Medicare proposal chops \$270 billion from this health program by increasing premiums, lowering rates paid to providers and encouraging elders to move to lower-cost managed care networks. Under this plan, Medicare premiums paid by the elderly will increase from \$46 a month to as much as \$88 per month.

The Children. Who on God's green earth would suggest that 114,000 Bay State children would be forced to go without health care coverage? The federal Medicaid program provides basic health care coverage for nearly one in three American children. The Republicans over seven years plan to cut \$170 billion from this program. Medicaid spending to Massachusetts will be slowed

7.24% next year and an additional 11% through the year 2000. The Republicans also plan to cut off cash assistance benefits to poor mothers by reducing the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program by \$100 billion.

Those In Need of Education. For students looking to have more hope for opportunity in their lives, or for parents already struggling to pay through the nose for their children's education, the budgets only mean more bad news. Newt Gingrich is planning to slash the higher education budget by \$10.2 billion by raising interest rates on guaranteed student loans, requiring students to begin paying off loans even before graduating, and repealing the direct lending program.

What do all of these spending cuts translate into for the average taxpayer in America? Not a whole heck of a lot. As a matter of fact, the Republicans' plans will raise taxes for more than half of all American taxpayers! You see, the GOPs have professed their desire to eliminate \$43 billion in tax owed that is currently refunded to the working poor. They plan to do this over the next seven years by prohibiting the working poor without children from receiving the credit and phasing it out altogether for workers who make more than \$11,630.

In the same breath, the Republicans want a \$500-per-child tax break for families making \$200,000 a year — which is, by the way, six times the national average family income. Additionally, Newt and crowd want to juggle the bookkeeping on income from selling stocks and

other assets, a ploy which can only be construed as a HUGE break for the wealthy.

The Republican budget packages that have rolled out of the U. S. Senate and Congress render fiscal blows to the elderly, the disabled, and the poor that go too far, are too excessive, and are just plain mean spirited.

Simply put, their ideas just stink!

— State Rep. Chris Hodgkins

## TRI-STATE JEWISH YOUTH GROUP

"The December Dilemma: Being a Jewish Kid at Christmastime," is the topic for discussion at the December 17 meeting of the Tri-State Jewish Youth Group. The leader will be Dr. Joel Rosen, a psychiatrist in private practice.

The youth group is open to all Jewish fifth through ninth graders, regardless of synagogue affiliation or Jewish educational background. There is no fee for this program, which is sponsored by Congregation Ahavath Sholom and Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, both of Great Barrington, and the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

The meeting will be held at Congregation Ahavath Sholom, North Street, Great Barrington, from 12:15–2:15 p.m. Bring your own dairy or vegetarian lunch. Drinks will be provided. For additional information, please call Beth Reitman Moser at 413-528-4643.

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MAGGIE LEONARD

## MONTEREY · BUILT PRIOR TO 1791

### THE BARN THAT FAITH WILL BUILD

Many of you have already heard the story of the small ailing lamb at Gould Farm who slept through the spring tornado. He was brand new, and too sick to go out to pasture with the other sheep. When the tornado lifted the sheep barn off its foundations, carried it across the lane and smashed it down among the vegetables, our lamb stayed curled in his nest of hay. Perhaps he was wakened by the rain or wind. He must have been amazed to look straight up into such a churning sky for the first time in his life.

Six months later it is no longer spring and the sheep who spent a carefree summer in pasture have some reason for concern as they brace against the early snow squalls. They gaze west across Gould Road to where earth has been heaved in huge heaps and cement walls shoulder out of the crater a bull dozer

carved in the flank of their old pasture. They gaze north across Wellman Road to where the ball diamond is stacked with fresh-cut lumber in lengths prescribed by Jacob Flaud. All is ready and everyone at Gould Farm, along with the sheep, is waiting for the barn-raising to come.

When Mennonite Disaster Service arrived in the area to help with clean-up after the tornado, Wayne Burkhardt discovered that the group leader, Paul Brubacher, grew up on the Burkhardt family farm in northern Michigan long before Wayne did. Well, there's plenty to talk about right there, and one thing led to another, and before long they were talking about building a barn.

Paul contacted someone who knew some of the Amish folk in Pennsylvania, and that's how Jacob Flaud came up to have a look. He took measurements and drew up a plan for a post and beam structure that would house not only the sheep but store some hay, and even provide space for dancing. Jacob went back

home to his farm and we set to work sawing lumber from logs felled by the storm. Chip Smith, the sawyer, saw us through tasks from wrestling logs to debarking and stickering. Oh, how we stickered!

Once, when Jacob Flaud called, he mentioned that the barn-raising would have to be fitted in around the Amish community's harvest, Thanksgiving, and hunting season. Jacob called again recently to ask about the weather and said that he was getting a group together to come. Without the easy conventions of phone and fax, what we're left with is faith and a quiet reliance on someone else's schedule—a schedule set on a clock tuned to the seasons. We know the barn will be built, and wait for the thrill of those long timbers raised and placed, and the ring of voices calling to one another in the colder air. It sure feels like something Will Gould could have put his hand and heart to.

— Donna Burkhardt

## ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Goodbye New England,

Hello Alabama

I always leave a place I love wistfully. Goodbye, my woods (I'm taking three pots with little trees to nourish in the red dirt of Alabama). Goodbye, Monterey. Goodbye, hundreds of tornado-snapped-off trees (when I come back next spring, the sight will fill me all over again with fearful memories). My four dogs and one cat are pressing around me: "Where are we going now?"

I drive my camper-pulling-Toyota into a gas station in Great Barrington. Good heavens, there're Dean and Fran...goodbye hugs. Down to The Deli to get one of their big sandwiches to go. Run into Shea's Pine Tree to fill my cup with fresh coffee...more hugs. That's it, Joan, time to hit the road to Alabama!

Driving carefully down the scenic but winding Route 7, my mind goes back about thirty years. Seems like it happened yesterday. I was living in Westport, Connecticut, with land in Monterey, Massachusetts. I traveled this road about a thousand times. I remember the night I set out from Westport (thirty years ago I was very foolish) with snow coming on. About New Milford the blizzard was fierce. I finally saw a motel sign. I left my beloved Lhasa Apso dog, Ivy, in the car, heater going. I signed in, went to my

room, went out again by a back door (propping it open). Ivy and I sneaked in and went to sleep in a warm bed.

Kent was the halfway point on this trip. Through the years I always stopped for gas at Walt's. Walt had been in the merchant marine, had seen the world. He has been bogged down running this deplorable station-store for years. After pumping, he would take me inside, seat me at a dirty table, get two beers, let his short, fat body into a chair, and we would talk and talk. His wife's shrill voice from upstairs, "Walt, come up here. I have some things I want you to do!" Walt said firmly, "I have a customer!" Then we would go on talking for another half hour. One time I saw a big fence across the front...nobody around. I went to the house next door (we had become friends; they had a large fenced-in front yard full of stray dogs they had taken in). "Walt had a heart attack. He died, and the house has been sold."

Route 7 has become I-84. There's Putnam Park! I came East a long time ago in a wooden station wagon from California, with two sons, aged five and two. In the early years in Westport, I would take Tony and Tim to play on the rocks and in the caves of Putnam Park.

I let Route 7 go left, stayed on 84 going into New York. My summer in the North this year was good but busy. Always some repairs to my house. I lost two good Monterey friends: Jean Stowell, who died down in North Carolina, and Edith Wilson. There were a lot of happy things about my summer. Sailing with my son Tim off Mystic, Connecticut, helping him plant some birthday bushes I gave him in his lovely old yard around his lovely old house (150 years old—of course, needing much repair...he is coming along).

The Fourth of July was great. At Lake Garfield the whole day—sunny, warm—with a good friend Kathy and her outstanding eight-months son. My many breakfasts at the Roadside (gigantic "rainbow" buckwheat pancakes, drowned in

Gould Farm maple syrup). Studied trees with Bonner and her children. Found "Singles Mingle" (we met for dinner, dancing, and a day of swimming, boating, and potluck at Stockbridge Bowl). Stretched out under a tree listening to the Boston Philharmonic at Tanglewood. Saw the crafts fair at Hancock Shaker Village (founded in 1790) west of Pittsfield. A group of us went to the fabulous Apple Circus. Danced the night away at the Monterey firemen's picnic and, with David McAllester, watched the dancers against the sunset outside Jacob's Pillow.

I went up to Saratoga Springs, New

York, to see Elizabeth Simons (formerly of Monterey). An interesting Victorian town. Early in the morning I went to the track for a sumptuous breakfast, watching the thoroughbreds exercise.



I attended three camper rallies. (My other life!) One was in Brewer, Maine. I saw camper folk I saw before in California, in Mexico and Texas, and met a lot of new friends whom I'll see down the road. In Maine I spent some time with my writer nephew, Strohn, and his son, Colin, just back from Budapest (writer's assignment there).

I watched the OJ trial come to an end. I visited my usual doctors and dentists (yearly checkup). I got a new permanent. Sue Moody White and Eleanor Kimberley celebrated their birthdays at lunch in my camper. Nursing my sick pup took a lot of time. A weekend trip to New York City.

Yes, it was a good summer.

The animals and I have been in the camper seven hours since I left The Pine Tree this morning. There's Thousand Trails Campground. We're in Hershey, Pennsylvania. The rain has cleared up...a nice sunset. Good, I found a "pull-through" space. I will hook up, give the dogs their dinner, walk them, mix myself a vodka martini, heat up a casserole, watch some TV, and get to bed for some much-needed sleep!

Yes, I am really on my way to Alabama!

— Joan Woodard Reed

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## THE FOREST

Dead tree limbs fall off leafless trees.  
Mist tints tree trunks gray  
as if an airbrush had just blown all over the forest.

Snap, Crackle, Thump.  
Raccoon plays and scurries.  
Wind whispers like a lullaby  
to put a baby asleep.

Something moves below swaying treetops  
under the damp canopy  
in depths of the forest.

Something moves in the forest.  
Step silently, the gnome is near.  
Sh.. Look. See him.  
His belly moves slightly side to side  
as he walks in rhythm to his step  
like a pendulum.

His old face wrinkles like the cracks  
of grandfather oak as he smiles.  
His hat as red as a raspberry,  
jewel-like, it shines with dew.

His tree-brown coat, furry  
like the feel of a rabbit skin.

As shy as he is he will walk up to you,  
ask you a riddle  
so hard  
so hard.

This is a riddle  
nobody knows.  
He cocks his head,  
waiting for the answer.

When you answer,  
if you do,  
he will laugh,  
a jolly laugh.

Suddenly he will perk up his ears  
and stare at you  
like a hawk.

Then with a jerk  
he will run into the forest,  
that dark, magical, mysterious forest.

— Stefan Amidon

## HERODOTUS

Whosoever catches life  
in his observant, discriminating sieve  
may write of history  
sifting import from event  
that this may live  
to trouble or instruct  
the reader who with searching eyes  
tries somehow here to realize  
that yesterday is now  
enriched by time.

Leonidas' cry is more sublime  
echoing in the heart today  
than even Thermopylae.

We move and live and have our being  
endowed by countless unknown acts  
those causes whose effects  
lie implicit in our every breath.  
Our lives grow greener  
out of all uncelebrated death  
that sacrifice from passing time subtracts.

Herodotus it was  
who with a sweeping hand  
arrested oblivion's command  
and then set history to teach  
and place some virtue of our lives  
within another generation's reach.

— A. O. Howell



## FOR THE BARN

The tornado tore up the forest and the barn was gone,  
Months ago, leaving a bigger sky. Now the ball field  
Is a lumber yard of neatly stacked piles.  
The hole is dug for a foundation.  
And order seems to seep back  
As rains refill the dredged pond.  
We will build. And we'll build. And we'll build.  
There is no certainty. It could happen again.  
But we will raise a barn,  
As we raise our children,  
In the face of entropy. To touch  
Those rough-hewn beams cut fresh from the forest  
Is to touch the future.  
The saw hums with dust and promise.

-- Amy Goldfarb

## CONFUSION

Stay away, leave me be,  
The wind your desire brings  
Tears at the web surrounding me  
My comfort, my prison sways  
As your passion drifts  
Between the threads  
Seeking the heart  
You hear  
  
No, come closer, in here  
Press your hands  
Hard and tender  
To my pulse  
Full and swift  
Curl me to the strength  
I light in you  
My shape, slender, sensuous  
In your grasp

When my web becomes a maze  
Images of my love reflected  
All bright shadows recollected  
Save me from the craze

— Lesley Givet



## SECOND STORM OF THE SEASON

Sleet and freezing rain  
on the roof and windows  
I worried that you  
wouldn't make it for tea  
But I found one of  
your poems in the snow.

— Richard Zukowski

## A FALL MIRACLE: PARTS OF THE PHEASANT

One day in late October, a young male ring-necked pheasant carefully picked several spoonfuls of barberries, more than he could really eat at once, and stored them in his crop for later digestion. Without giving it much thought, he decided to cross Route 7 in Lenox to see if there were any weed seeds on the other side. This was the last small thought the pheasant had.

We came along minutes later, in a late afternoon rush like everyone else. The body on the highway came up fast and as we passed I saw such a brilliant flash of blue-green that my first thought was "peacock!" We pulled over and ran back. The traffic was heavy, so we stood on the shoulder for a few minutes, looking at the pile of windy feathers in front of us. Every time a truck went by and kicked up a breeze, we saw new colors: bronze, pale blue, olive, purple, all manner of browns and red-browns. We saw that the neck was broken and split open, scarlet barberries spilled on dark asphalt in the long slanting sun of a late October afternoon.

The pheasant was still warm when we got him home. We admired his small spurs, short and sharp, without the long curve that our roosters develop. We saw that the bright red on his face is skin, not feathers, and his eyes are orange-gold and dark in the center.

The ring-necked pheasant is a feral bird, first introduced here from Europe in 1887, now well-established. In Massachusetts, the wild populations are regularly restocked by the fish and game department to ensure a good supply for game hunters. In Berkshire County there are few known breeding populations of pheasants, but in the eastern and northeastern parts of the state there are many.

Pheasants are wild chickens, like the grouse. They feed on the ground, and when snow is deep or crusty they may not

that a quail which is flushed twice in a row will be too exhausted for any further flying until it has had a rest.

The cookbooks are full of advice for preparing pheasant. Almost all of them involve lots of added fat, with lardoons or bacon strips or a sort of paste of butter and flour. Even with winter coming on so soon, the pheasant is not a fat creature. Our chickens are always plenty fatty at this time of year but the pheasant was completely lean. We realized, as we plucked him, that he was counting on his feathers to keep him warm.

The pheasant is well-supplied with what we call "fluffies." Some are tiny, tucked into the spaces under longer feathers, and some are quite long themselves, as much as four inches, and look more like fine strips of rabbit fur than feathers. They are completely soft and flexible and seem almost to have no

central "quill." Some feathers are fluffy near the skin and then sleek and glossy near the tip where they lie on the surface and make an outer shell over insulation.

Our pheasant weighed less than two pounds. We ate him one day, roasted, and then the next day in soup, quite delicate and delicious both times. Now we have his feathers to adore: the half-inch bright blues of the neck, the hoary edged fluffies of the breast, and the two-foot tail feathers, barred with black and fringed on the edges. This is another fall miracle: all this diversity of color and form made of weed seeds and barberries and just the right genetic code.

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The red-brown tip of this feather has a greenish iridescence, when the light is right.

survive. These are the times people are likely to see them on the ground under bird feeders where the snow is trampled.

We plucked our pheasant and sorted the feathers. The two long central tail-feathers were not quite fully emerged, that is, this bird had molted recently and some of its feathers were still growing from a soft sheath with a gelatinous material in it. Maybe its flight across the highway would have been stronger and higher if its feathers had been fully grown.

Pheasants have big flight muscles (the breast meat), which make them powerful fliers. But these muscles have less oxygen supplied to them than on some birds so they have little endurance. The flight muscle fibers of most birds are dark red, making "dark meat," but the pheasants, grouse, quail and other chicken relatives have light breast meat. The dark fibers of other birds contain the red oxygen-carrying compounds myoglobin and cytochrome. These birds can keep up sustained flight. Someone has observed

— Bonner J. McAllester

(Note: In order to bring home a game species such as a ring-necked pheasant, it is necessary to have the proper license. I don't have such a license; the above story is a work of fiction.)

## WILDLIFE SURVEY

I'll continue to abjure the graduated species listing in the interest of a wholistic survey.

### Consequences of Poor Mast

Mast is the nuts of forest trees accumulated on the ground. Around here that means acorns, beechnuts, hazelnuts, walnuts, butternuts, and hickory nuts. The last three are so hard-shelled that only squirrels can get into them; only the acorns are abundant. Some years they are so thick on the ground as to make walking in the wood perilous to humans, due to the ball-bearing effect. This year the acorns are scanty, and many of those that did reach the ground are inedible. Our long drought doubtless had much to do with it. We now have a climax population of squirrels after several years of acorn bumper-crops. Now the squirrels are all hungry. Dale Duryea is getting squirrel calls: one was on Beartown Road, another was at the Thorn place on Main Road. Both caused damage in their earnest quest for food; the latter one discovered easy ingress and egress via the chimney. A bear ripped open a bird feeder in Richmond November 8, and over in New York another tried to force his way into a house during one of our deluges. A raccoon found a way into the McAll-

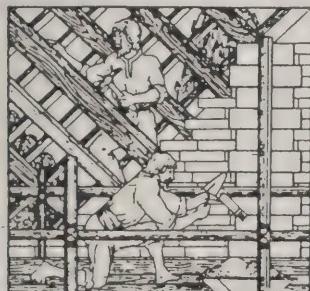
ester-Baker barn via the cat door and has been raising havoc in the grain bins. It's a question what will become of our big population of turkeys without a rich layer of acorns under the snow this winter.

seen by Dale, one of three or four he has seen over the years; a woodcock, seen by David McAllester in his swamp at the east end of Lake Garfield, late afternoon, October 17.

### Foliage

In late October the hills were predominantly brown in various shades from the oaks, grey from the bare branches, and green from the evergreens. But here and there would be a patch of bright yellow provided by aspens and white birches, and a flare of yellow or scarlet from a sugar maple that hadn't let go yet. Groves of sumacs still had their red banners out. It was like mid-September when the first bright branches began to show themselves amidst the uniform green. Virginia Woolf spoke of the trees coming out of uniform into civilian gaudiness in the fall. But now, in mid-November, it's back into uniform, gray and green, and the last color is the fawn yellow-brown of the larches. Our best display is south of Route 23 a mile east of town; there's another along Hop Brook in Tyringham, north of the Monterey Road.

A quiet display, in miniature, is provided by the persistent wild thyme, or "meadow savory," putting forth pungent new blossoms by the score while earlier ones, starting in spring, have long ago gone to seed. Their purple sets off another small riot of color: the wild strawberry leaves in yellow, green, scarlet, and everything in between. They hug the warm earth and outlast everything else.



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### Our Own Inundation of the Nile

The turbid waters that have been racing down the watercourses, jumping brook and river banks and flooding meadows, highlight the never-ending process of moving the high places into the low places. Sand bars and pond beaches, and brook and river pools suddenly turn black as the humus in the woods moves downstream. It's the stuff of life, all along the way, and reminds us of what goes on when any drop of water leaches, dissolves, and slides ineluctably down.

— David P. McAllester

# THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HANNAH CLIMENA PIXLEY

Hannah Climena Pixley was born in Monterey on October 24, 1862, and raised by Elijah Pixley and Climenta Brewer Pixley of Monterey, whom she referred to as Grandfather and Grandmother, and by Mary Jane Pixley, their daughter, whom Hannah Climena sometimes called Mother. There is evidence that her father was Arthur McArthur of Sheffield.

In 1904, Hannah Climena Pixley bought 150 acres of land with a house (referred to these days as "the Ariail house," and pictured this month in our architecture series, on p. 9) on Beartown Road, where she lived with her first-born daughter, Mary Elizabeth, into the middle years of this century. It passed out of the Ariail family in the 1950s; Don and Ellen Coburn, the current owners, bought the Ariail house in 1976.

Some time later, Elmer Forrest of Lee paid a visit. He recounted for the Coburns how as a young man he would snowshoe up into Beartown Forest with his father to check on his Gramma Ariail (Hannah Climena) and Auntie Mew (a family name, along with "Mamie," for Mary Elizabeth), who lived together snowbound in the old house for many months every year. Elmer recalls that she greeted visitors to the house on Beartown Road gun in hand—not surprising for a woman of her time living alone with her daughter in such isolated circumstances. He would bring her Granger rough-cut tobacco, which she smoked in a clay pipe.

The Coburns' interest in the past life of their house led Elmer Forrest to send them a copy of Hannah Climena's autobiography, a nugget of family history preserved in a handwritten composition book. Mrs. Flora Brantley, of Raleigh, North Carolina, a granddaughter of Hannah Climena and niece of Elmer Forrest, writes that she made the single-spaced, thirty-three-page typescript from a "black and white composition notebook given to me by my mother, Vera Forrest Beckley. It was evidently a notebook of my great grandmother's, Hannah Climena Pixley—no date given, but probably begun in 1936 when she was seventy-four years old. The original has no punctuation, capitalization, or paragraphs, and I corrected it only to make it more legible to read. Some words I copied just as written, because I couldn't find them in the dictionary. This was supposedly dictated and written by her daughter, Mary E. (Mamie) Ariail."

The descendants of Hannah Climena Pixley have graciously permitted us to print this story in the Monterey News. Readers will find a detailed picture of a life lived entirely in Monterey and surrounding towns beginning 133 years ago. It was a life with some brutally difficult episodes, which she describes fully in her strong, unschooled voice. As a schoolgirl and young woman, she also had innocent adventures with cousins and friends, and tells those stories as well. Through it all runs a mystery, for she maintains that there was an untold secret surrounding her birth and parentage. Some readers may think this mystery imagined, but they should know that events, names, places, and dates set down here fit neatly with extant, independent accounts and records. Nothing has come to light that shows any part of this story to be made up; whether Mary Jane Pixley and Arthur McArthur were her true parents is not proved or disproved by any evidence.

Hannah Climena Pixley's story will appear over several months in the Monterey News, edited for length and cohesiveness, with commentary based on research by Peter Murkett and Ian Jenkins. The complete autobiographical text may be seen at the Monterey Library.

Elijah and Climenta Brewer Pixley lived on a farm near the intersection of present-day Route 23 (Main Road) and Route 57, above Lake Buel and not far from Hartsville, where some later episodes in this story take place. Pixley Road is a local name for Route 57 between Main Road and Hartsville.

## Hannah Climena Pixley Begins Her Tale

This is the true life story of a Berkshire County woman who is now seventy-four years old, as it was written for her daughter beginning with her childhood. It is not fiction but reality. How often I hear people say, "If I could live my life over again," but I will say if I had to live my whole life in secret, as I have

had to, I would not want to live it all over again. As I sometimes used to see it as a child, sometimes in want, sometimes in cruel things that was done in the olden times that I will tell later, for there are often things in real life that are never told for as I write this, the last one has gone down to the grave with one secret untold, that could I think of, told everything.

Now my story opens with what little there was told about me as a babe. It

seems there was not much of a mother for me. I was left with supposed-to-be grandparents [Elijah and Climenta Brewer Pixley] and, to be brought up while an infant on cracker water and soft crackers to live or die, while the woman that claimed me as her child nursed another baby girl at her own breast. That always seemed strange to me, and what is more so, that girl grew up to look and act just like my

[continued, p. 18]

to nurse and love another not her own by the way the girl she  
did nurse is dead one time i heard her singing these words  
in after years here are the words of what she was singing  
what could i do what could i say how could i bear my  
child to go a way i see she was very unhappy over some  
thing so I said Mother come to dinner then she answered  
me like this i am mother to no one but my son just  
what she meant by that i never knew for she never told  
me so now i will resume my story and leave people to  
judge for them selves untill later for i have found in  
my seventy four years of life that this is a greate old  
world and truth is far stranger than fiction as my  
story will tell of my life from childhood up now i will  
have to turn back the pages of life a great manz years  
to resume my story it begins at an old farm house  
that stood on the old stage highway where dwelt  
a kind hearted old man and his old wife she  
was a hard working old woman very crabid and  
driving they had raised four girls and one son  
that boy had always been his mothers idol  
she never allowed her husband to corect him  
for any thing he had done i often heard

From the second page of the composition book, Hannah Climena's story written in the hand of her daughter, Mary Elizabeth.

girl grew up to look and act just like my supposed-to-be mother [Mary Jane Pixley], while I grew up entirely different. It always seemed strange to me that my own mother should cast aside her own child to nurse and love another not her own. By the way, the girl she did nurse is dead. One time I heard her singing these words in after years. Here are the words of what she was singing: "What could I do? What could I say? How could I bear my child to go away?" I saw she was very unhappy over something, so I said, "Mother, come to dinner." Then she answered me like this: "I am mother to no one, but my son." Just what she meant by that I never knew, for she never told me. So now I will resume my story and leave people to judge for themselves, until later, for I have found in my seventy-four years of life, that this is a queer old world and truth is far stranger than fiction. As my story will tell of my life from childhood up till now, I will have to turn back the pages of life a great many years to resume my story.

It begins at an old farm house that stood on the old stage highway where dwelt a kind hearted old man and his old wife. She was a hard-working old woman, very crabbed and driving. They had raised four girls and one son and that boy had always been his mother's idol. She never allowed her husband to correct him for anything he had done. I often heard poor old Grandfather say my only son ruined me.

What that meant, I did not understand, yet I always felt there was a deep mystery there. Something I could not see into. One thing was this Grandfather had a big farm barn built not far from the house. A short distance from that he hired a deep-well dug seventy-two feet deep at a great expense, as they had to blast forty-seven feet through solid rock. I have heard them say that it was the only water supply for the whole farm. And as near as I could ever learn, about the time I appear on the scene, or farm, rather, that never failing well was suddenly stoned up and covered over with large stone; thereby cutting off the water supply for his farm entirely. Then grandfather had to go and buy a water wright on another man's land, buy pipe for a boot, a quarter of a mile; hire the ditch dug and pipe laid

at another great expense. Then he built a water house with a great deep watering trough, running through it out to the highway to water thirsty horses.

Now here is where I was when first I begin to hear about myself from an old neighbor woman, who had come up to call on Grandmother. She finds me a blue-eyed curly-haired child, about two years old, on the top of that watering trough, playing in the water, my clothes soaking wet. She told me that she took me in and put dry clothes on me and she told me she could never see just how it could be for most every time she came to see Grandmother, she would find me up on the top of the side of that tank of water, leaning over to play in the water where if I had fallen in I would have drowned. It was a wonder I did not catch cold and die. This old woman told me that she had lost her little girl, just my age. She told my old Grandmother if they did not want me, she and her husband would take me, but for some reason, they would not give me up, although Grandmother never seemed to care for me or have any love for me. I used to often hear her say, "I don't see what you was ever here for."

The best friend I had was poor old Grandfather. He never give me an unkind word, as long as he lived. I think he loved me. He always called me the little gal. He never knew I was at play over the water tank where I was in danger of being drowned, for he never would have allowed anything like that. For he was one good old man, and when I got old enough to know, I sure did love him. I soon learned if I wanted anything to ask poor old Grampa and I got it. I don't think that suited Mother, for she used to say, "Yes, he thinks more of you than he ever did his own children."

Then Grandmother would scold and say, "Yes, he is just as much of a child as she is." But I think the old man knew a lot and felt sorry for me, and poor old Grandfather, I think he knew a great many things he did not dare tell.

He was a very kind-hearted old man. I never knew anyone to go hungry from his door. Sometimes Grandmother would scold him for giving to people, but all Grandfather would ever say back to her would be, "The devil, old woman, I can't

see any body in want or hungry. What I have done to help them will never kill me, if I never get any pay for what I do to help other people." He was just like that, while Grandmother was sour as an old sour apple, and that apple would have to be most darned sour to come up to that old woman. I never see her laugh in my life, and never see her smile but once in my whole life. And I will tell you about that later. She thought a child never should play or have any toys whatever, but they should just work and study, as soon as they was big enough to pick up chips.

That made my child life very gloomy for as soon as I can remember how I did want a doll. Well an old neighbor came in, took a cob, tied a white cloth over one end for a head and another cloth around the middle of the cob for a skirt. I never can forget how I hugged that—my first doll—up to me. Now, think you children of today, who have so many boughten things—I often see you, too, do not love them and care for them as much as I did that poor little corn-cob doll. Well there was no toys for poor children in them days. We did not have gay pictures on magazines as we have today. I remember once when I first went to school I won a prize. It was just a picture of an Indian girl. It cost half a dollar and was not near as pretty as what you see on magazine covers today, but how proud I felt of that picture.



## THE OBSERVER - OCTOBER

The drought broke in October. At the beginning of the month, we were more than six inches short of the regional rainfall norm recorded in Pittsfield; by month's end we had recorded nearly two inches more rain than the regional norm for the year to date, 38.56" in Monterey, compared to the norm of 36.70". More than eleven inches of rain fell here in October, almost seven times the rainfall this month a year ago in Monterey, and nearly two inches more than fell in Pittsfield this month, where the previous record of 7.04" was set in October of 1955.

It was stormy rain; a lot of it fell sideways on the weekends, discouraging tourism. Forecasters quickly resumed using anthropocentric modifiers for inclement and wet weather, words like "ugly" and "nasty," after months of fine beach weather during the summer, when they had just begun to acknowledge the benefits to people of more water coming from the sky, as the sun blazed down day after day, drying everything out. In one month the balance tipped back sharply. It was also five degrees warmer, on average, than October last year, and about three-and-a-half degrees above the norm, likely due to the tropical origin of the storms that dumped so much rain here.

We had mild sunny weather as well, notably the second full week of the month. In short, anything-goes New England weather came back in style after a San Diego summer, and it was something to reckon with. These are the numbers:

High temp (10/13) .....	76°
Low temp. (10/18) .....	31°
Wind-chilled low temp. (10/31) .....	14°
Avg. high temp. ....	62°
Avg. low temp. ....	42°
Avg. temp. ....	52°
Monthly norm. (Pitts.) .....	48.4°
Precip. occ. ....	14 days
Total precip. ....	11.30" rain
Monthly norm. (Pitts.) .....	3.26"
High bar. press. (10/31) .....	30.25"
Low bar. press. (10/28) .....	29.35"
High humidity (10/8) .....	90%
Low humidity (10/12) .....	63%
Avg. wind speed.....	2.33 mph
High wind gust (10/28) .....	36 mph

## PLUTO IN SAGITTARIUS

Pluto's in Sagittarius now, one of the "fire" signs, and planetary transits through the sign bring fire to our attention in subtle and obvious ways. It's as if Pluto is now in charge of an internal spiritual foundry, a sort of cosmic blacksmith shop.

Where we're still hanging on to old habits of thought and behavior, it's as if the planet (Pluto) is carrying the weight of our unfinished business and the slag not yet skimmed off the top of the molten metal chokes off the oxygen needed for purification of the metal. That severely modifies our freedom to express the highest potential of the new planetary position.

Why? Because the planets and signs don't tell us how we must behave. Our choices to let go and let Love teach us through the lessons life brings—or not—indicate how much of the potential goodness of any planetary position we are free to access.

Where we've skimmed enough slag from the surface of our years of experience, the energy of the sign (Sagittarius) predominates, and we're free to explore the warmth of this fire without tripping over our old baggage.

Fire is sometimes expressed through the warmth of human compassion. Sagittarius is the sign of Saint Nicholas, the optimistic alchemist. (His feast day is December 6, while the sun is in Sagittarius, though Christmas itself occurs in the more sober sign of Capricorn.)

But since Sag, like all the signs, is a coin with two faces, it is symbolized by both Jabba the Hut and Luke Skywalker, by "the Ugly American" and the young King Arthur. Sagittarius invites us to consider the impact of our ideals and expectations, of our concepts of abundance and generosity, our dreams of expansion and need for freedom. It's just a little something to consider while shopping for the holidays.

— MaryKate Jordan



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## VOXED

### Leo's Free Day

Way back Leo told me of a ritual observed at the small New England boys' boarding school he attended in the late nineteen-fifties. There were daily assemblies before lunch at which the headmaster usually presided over schedule announcements, a brief presentation by a guest, a short talk on some theme or other, etc. On a few randomly selected, exquisitely rare occasions, he would announce a free day, the unequivocal suspension of all scheduled activities for twenty-four hours, starting immediately. Leo and his two-hundred-odd mates would whistle and shout, stamp their feet and bang their chair seats, flinging their neckties into the air (dress code went on hold, too) while the head man stood at the lectern engulfed in the din, smiling down at the floor, pacing a few steps back and forth with his hands thrust deep into the pockets of his loose-fitting suit until the roar died down enough for him to add a few footnotes before letting them go their many ways for that precious day. Whenever Leo tells me of this (what good story is told only once?), he dwells on the headmaster, describing him—with unmistakable respect and affection—as a young man of an older generation, slender, agile, bald, with fine features and

lively eyes, a pensive manner, very keen, formidable. A serious man with a large heart, an autocrat practicing thoughtful democracy.

Leo is long since no schoolboy. He is a man in his middle years, an accomplished artisan who answers to himself. He maintains an irregular schedule of remunerative work and a close bond with Valya (an independent tradesperson herself), as well as his immediate family and a dozen or so friends. There is no longer a head man of stature and authority to grant free days, but Leo has managed to import the tradition, modified to his current circumstances. Once a year, more or less, and usually in the dark days of December, Leo gives himself a free day.

It's not so easy, he says, to make good use of a free day. Faculty members, as he recalls it, took different approaches; some of them shed boys gladly, and went off—or stayed in—on their own, while others got together with some of the boys for a hike, or a ball game, or a short trip into the world for pizza and a movie. For real adults in ordinary life it's different.

Leo's method of choosing the day is vague. The random, unpredictable nature of the originating prep school event is a key element. If I call him up in the morning and say, "Leo, let's go skiing in Vermont," he may say, "Yes!" and we may go—as we have, with exhilarating

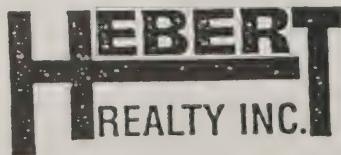
results. Now that has the randomness (from his end). But Leo's free day is a private, seasonal, cleansing affair, so he has to hit the launch button himself, making randomness problematic. The best he can tell me is that he feels it coming on, and then one morning he wakes up and it's there.

There are some firm rules. One is, Don't use the phone. He doesn't answer, he doesn't call. He doesn't announce anything to the world, except maybe to Valya, depending on their immediate circumstances, including the emotional weather as well as the practical schedule. (Last December, when they became close again after years at a friendly distance, Leo went into free day unannounced, screwing up some casually made plans and causing a terrible fight. In the end, new ground rules governing free days for any member of a couple were established.) One year coming out of his free day, Leo discovered that a family member had been hospitalized after an automobile accident, and he was deeply shaken that he was out of touch—for what? he asked himself. After that it was a few years before the next free day in Leo's life. He said he became uncertain as to whether the practice was a cleansing fast or spiritual chemotherapy.

What does he do on a free day? He describes it as following his nose very closely. There may be a jag of window washing, or of looking into boxes of old photos, reading through letters, reading anything. He may sit at the General Store or Roadside for a time, but he is more likely to get there by walking than driving, and he is more likely to follow a ridge line or a stream than he is to walk on any road. Once he climbed a tree for the view and stayed there a long time. Once he walked into Great Barrington following the course of the old Monterey Road where it heads down the hill by the stone house, away from present-day Route 23 and toward Stevens Pond (which is only about sixty-five years old), and departing again from 23 where the state road begins, this time to the north along a short crescent that still has an old house and some barns, like a happily neglected exhibit behind the highway. That time someone he knew stopped to offer him a

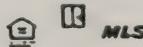


### CONDOS TO CASTLES



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lift, and he took the ride even though he had no particular destination; he ended up walking home again at two-thirty in the morning, through the center of sleeping (as well as, he told me, judging by the lights, here-and-there wide-awake) Monterey. Once he went to the Monterey Library and opened every book on the local history shelf, left to right, reading some and paging through others. Once he set up a ladder to reach the first strong branches of a tall pine tree near his house, then climbed the tree the rest of the way up. I happened to stop by that day; I saw the ladder leaning against the tree, but couldn't see him from the ground or find him anywhere on his place. I left a note. It never occurred to me to climb the tree myself.

To me, Leo's free days have a high flip-flop factor: they seem alternately too serious (the headmaster lives in Leo's own head), and too goofy (the whole damned school lives in his head). I take this as evidence of good value.

Don't confuse Leo with me: he is stocky, I am thin; he drives an old red Volvo station wagon, I drive a blue Ford pickup, a little less old. In this threatening and hazardous season, I cleave to whatever threadbare routines my life holds like a kid to his blanket; Leo likes to bust it up a little, howl discreetly into the long night sky. Huddled by the stove, cups in hand, we trade survival tips and toast the New Year.

— Peter Murkett

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— Matthew Breuer, a Roadside regular

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## MONTEREY GRANGE

The Monterey Grange No. 291 met on November 1, when the program was on child safety and Veterans' Day. Lecturer Mary Wallace gave an interesting and informative report on the annual state session at Plymouth. On November 4, Monterey Grange was invited to Williamsburg Grange No. 225 for their ninety-fifth anniversary. Monterey hosted Berkshire South Pomona on November 8. On the fifteenth of the month, members met at the Lecturer's house at 6 p.m. to go on a fun night, joined by friends and members of other granges.

At the December 6 meeting, members will decorate the hall and bring items for cheers boxes.

— Fraternally,  
Mary Wallace, Lecturer



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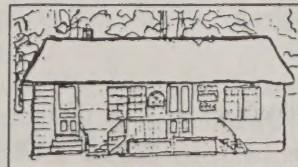
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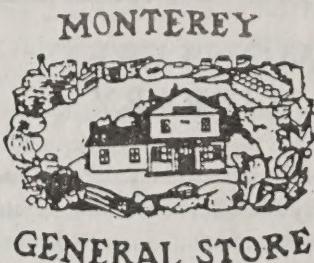
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## PERSONAL NOTES

Our congratulations to Lyman and Patricia Thomson of Brett Road, who have a wonderful new addition to their family. Their daughter, Rachel, was born October 11 at Fairview Hospital.

Congratulations also to Jeffrey and **Hannah Pedersen Moran**, whose baby girl, **Abbey Emilia**, was born on November 18 at home in Great Barrington. Abbey weighed in at nine pounds, and joins elated and most helpful big sister Elise, almost two. Best wishes also to proud grandparents Alf and Lena Pedersen of Main Road.

Hats off to Bob Rausch of Hupi Road, who completed a three-and-a-half-day training workshop for the Coverts Project, intended to encourage landowners to be advocates of sound forest stewardship, and to deliver this message to friends, relatives, neighbors, and other people in their communities. Sponsored by the University of Massachusetts Department of Forestry and Wildlife Management, the Massachusetts Forest Stewardship Program and the Ruffed Grouse Society, the workshop was held at the Harvard Forest in Petersham.

Kudos for Lucy Rosenthal of Bear-town Road, who achieved High Honors for the first marking period at Berkshire School in Sheffield. Lucy is a freshman at Berkshire. Great job!



Very happy birthday wishes this month to **Stefan Grotz** on December 1, to **Matthew Christopher** on December 2, to **Graham and Madigan Hines** on December 3, to **Walter Andersen, Elizabeth Deloy, and Karen Schulze** on December 5, to **Simon Spagnoletti** on December 7, to **Mike Mielke III** on December 8, to **Natasha Grotz** on December 12, to **Morgan Clawson and Stacy Inger** on December 20, to **Don Amstead and Hedy Craven** (in Eugene, Oregon!) on December 25, and to **Eloisa Dean and Eliana Schulze** on December 27.

Heartfelt warm wishes to all readers for a wonderfully joyful holiday season.

News to share? Birthday wishes? Please just give me a call at 528-4519, or jot items down and drop them in the mail to me, address Route 23. Your contributions are most appreciated!

— Stephanie Grotz

Bjorn Jenssen (known to most as Del) died at home with his family around him November 18. There will be a memorial essay by members of the family in the *News* next month.

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P. MURKETT

River Road is still closed to vehicles, and the hills above the road are still a blasted landscape, even though much good work has been done to remove broken trees after the tornado. Even before the storm there was concern about holding back the hill above the road where past efforts at wooden and rubber-tire riprap have deteriorated. Now the potential for erosion has increased due to the loss of trees, even though the wooded hill immediately above the riprap section was not the hardest hit. But without cars, the road now makes a nice riverside walk. Just south of this view, a natural litter of pine needles, twigs, and snow had appeared late in November, and remained, with no rush of passing cars to sweep the old blacktop clean.

## CALENDAR

**Sundays,** AA meetings, 9 a.m. in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

**Wednesday, December 6** Meeting of the Monterey Grange No. 291, 8 p.m. at the Grange Hall.

**Friday, December 8** Program on breast and cervical cancer open to all women

### STEFAN GROTH ATTORNEY AT LAW

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of Monterey over sixty years of age, 9 a.m. in the basement room of the town offices. Sponsored by Elder Services of Berkshire County. Information 528-5994.

**Wednesday, December 20** Meeting of the Monterey Grange No. 291, 8 p.m. at the Grange Hall.

**Tuesday, December 26** Free blood pressure clinic, 9-10:30 a.m. in the basement room of the Monterey Grange (town offices), Main Road.

**Wednesday, December 20** Meeting of the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District, 7 p.m. in the church basement.

**Saturday, December 23** Square and contradance at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, 8-11 p.m., to benefit the South Berkshire County Com-

munity Music School. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances taught, beginners and children welcome. Refreshments. Adults \$6, children \$3. Information: 413-528-9385 or 518-329-7578.

**Sunday, December 24**

Candlelight service of carols and readings, 7 p.m., Monterey United Church of Christ, followed by Gould Farm's Living Creche at about 8 p.m.

Candlelight service of reflective meditation, with carols and devotional readings, 11:30 p.m., Monterey United Church of Christ.





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We invite readers to submit letters, news items, opinions, stories, poetry, drawings, and photographs. Please send submissions by the fifteenth of the month before publication, addressed to the attention of the Editor.

Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the *News* by mail to Susan LePrevost, Business Manager.

Address your request for advertising rates and information to the Editor. For further information, telephone the Editor at 413-528-3454 evenings, or 528-9937 days.

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*Contributions from local artists this month: Maureen Banner, p. 13;  
Erika Crofut, pp. 1, 3, 6, 10, 12, 20, 22, 23; Scott Duhon, p. 7; Bonner McAllester, p. 14.*

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